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SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 7, 1954

Getting fined down by rising at 8:00 and not taking a siesta during the day.

L., N. and I embarked at 11:30 in N.'s elegant and efficient Mercedes-Benz for a trip to Avila, seventy miles from Madrid, especially famed for its wonderful 11th Century walls and ramparts. Motored through mist, rain and mountains. Last night at the Dunns' we had met the M[illegible]ues de San Domingo, who insisted we visit his property at Avila. We did so, discovering it with difficulty. It is a [illegible] small house, in a spacious garden, in the lee of the city walls — a heavenly spot. The caretaker's family built a fire, for it was chilly, and invited us to bring our picnic indoors. This we did, to our great enjoyment.

On the way back to Madrid, we detoured to the Escorial. I had always longed to see it, but am now almost sorry I did, although I do want to go back when one can visit the interior, with reputedly magnificent tapestries, ornaments and tombs of all but two of the Spanish Kings since the great Charles V. Its bulk is quite startling, but it must have required considerable ingenuity on the part of Philip II and his architect to have contrived anything so angularly ugly.

The Castillian country is very impressive because of its austerity and understatement.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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